

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT  
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
ZOOM and IN PERSON  
Freedom Hall  
COTUIT, MA 02635  
May 18, 2026**

The meeting was called to order by John Havel at 6:00 pm on May 16, 2026.

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Havel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Mr. Havel conducted roll call.**

Commissioners present in person: Seth Burdick; John Havel

Chair Mark Lynch via Zoom.

Treasurer Ray Pirrone and Assistant Treasurer Ryan Ouellette (in person)

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**Public Comment:**

Lally Lloyd asked whether comments regarding the Annual District Meeting script should be offered during public comment or during the related agenda discussion. The Committee agreed that comments could be made during the discussion as the script was reviewed.

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**Meeting Minutes Approval – 2 Meetings:**

**MOTION: To approve the meeting minutes of April 13, 2026.**

**Motion made by: Seth Burdick      Seconded by: John Havel**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION: To approve the meeting minutes of April 27, 2026.**

**Motion made by: Seth Burdick      Seconded by: John Havel**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION: To reconsider the approval of the April 27, 2026, meeting minutes and approve them as amended to revise the discussion relating to Article 5 by replacing references to “mediate” or “mediation” with “arbitrate” or “arbitration.”**

**Motion made by: Mark Lynch      Seconded by: Seth Burdick**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

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**Review of Script for Annual District Meeting**

Discussion included how warrant articles would be presented, which board or committee would present each article, and how responsibility for motions would be assigned.

It was clarified that each article would be presented as a motion, rather than simply read from the warrant. The Committee discussed the importance of using correct motion language, particularly for articles involving borrowing, raise and appropriate language, or transfers from certified free cash, as those funding mechanisms affected vote thresholds.

The Moderator stated that the Fire Commissioners, Water Commissioners, Prudential Committee, and Bylaws Committee would each be allowed up to five minutes at the beginning of the meeting to provide context to voters. Discussion followed regarding whether elected officials should speak from the dais or from the floor when commenting on articles. After discussion of past practice and meeting procedure, it was agreed that elected officials could speak from the dais for the upcoming meeting. The Committee also discussed the role of the Bylaws Committee, including whether its representatives should present bylaw articles and respond to related questions. Members acknowledged that the Bylaws Committee was best positioned to explain its proposed amendments, while also noting concerns regarding changes from past practice and meeting logistics.

The Committee then reviewed the warrant articles, identified appropriate funding language, and assigned responsibility for presenting certain motions. Discussion also included whether the historical society article should be taken out of order for better meeting flow. It was noted that the article number would remain unchanged even if presented out of sequence.

The final script was expected to be revised into formal motion language, and paper copies were requested for the Annual District Meeting.

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### **Review of Fire Station Debt Planning**

Mr. Pirrone reported on a recent meeting with fire department representatives and the project manager to review the fire station project budget and forecast. He expressed concern that project billings had lagged behind projections, although the project team indicated that billings were expected to catch up. Discussion focused on the District's anticipated decision later in the year regarding whether to proceed with long-term borrowing or continue short-term financing. Mr. Pirrone explained that uncertainty surrounding demolition and renovation of the existing fire station could affect final project costs, making it difficult to determine the appropriate long-term borrowing amount. He noted that if additional short-term borrowing became necessary, there could be unbudgeted issuance costs of approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000, potentially covered through reserve funds. Committee members asked whether current spending remained on track. Mr. Pirrone reported that approximately \$2 million had been spent, with additional invoices recently received, and that project representatives indicated costs remained at or below projections. Discussion also briefly addressed uncertainty surrounding future borrowing costs and interest rates. Mr. Pirrone stated that no immediate decision was required but wanted the Committee to be aware of the potential considerations ahead of the eventual borrowing decision.

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### **CFD Website**

A website update was provided regarding the District's website redesign and ADA compliance efforts. It was reported that a thorough review of ADA website requirements had been completed, accessibility plugins had been installed, and substantial work had been done to update existing pages and content. It was noted that before launching the updated site, the goal was to ensure that at least seven years of approved meeting minutes for the Prudential, Water, and Fire Commissioners were available online to meet legal retention requirements, with work currently nearing completion of that benchmark. Once finalized, the updated site was expected to be made visible, with additional backfilling of older records to continue afterward.

Plans were outlined to present the updated website to the Fire and Water Commissioners and provide documentation for staff members responsible for future updates. It was also noted that the current website would be fully archived before the transition to preserve existing content.

It was acknowledged that, as with any website transition, some issues may arise after launch, and patience would be appreciated as updates and corrections are made. Members expressed appreciation for the significant work involved. Discussion concluded with consensus to introduce the updated website after the Annual District Meeting rather than before.

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### **Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Pirrone reported that, while a formal Treasurer's Report was still being developed, a review of the District's overall financial position showed that operations remained in a favorable position. He stated that a shortfall in tax revenue had been offset by stronger-than-anticipated Water Department revenue, resulting in the District being approximately \$1 million ahead in operational cash flow.

Mr. Pirrone further reported that expenditures across District articles remained at or below authorized spending levels, with most trending below budget. He noted that this positioned the District well for potential free cash at year-end while also providing sufficient funding capacity to absorb anticipated increases in school-related expenditures.

He stated that overall revenues were slightly ahead of projections through the end of the ten-month period, while expenditures remained well below authorized levels. Based on current figures, he indicated that the District appeared to be in a strong financial position heading into the close of the fiscal year and that, at this time, he did not anticipate any need to utilize reserve funds.

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### **Public Comment**

None.

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### **Matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair**

Mr. Havel shared an observation that the ospreys had returned to their nests near the tennis courts and appeared undisturbed despite the fencing that had been installed around the school property.

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### **Adjournment**

**MOTION: To adjourn.**

**Motion made by: Seth Burdick**

**Seconded by: John Havel**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Gina Gonsalves*

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